



Clacton & District: Top two prepare for cup clash

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The **Handicap Knock-Out Cup** organised by the Clacton & District League started in December last year with 37 teams but now there are just two teams left in the competition – who happen to be the League's top two sides, Nomads Panthers and Windsor Condors.

In this week's semi-finals, both teams were involved in hard-fought encounters, the Condors beating fellow Division One side Nomads Lions 5-3 whilst the Panthers edged out Division Two Brotherhood D in a 5-4 nail-biter.

On paper, the Panthers had the easier task against Second Division opposition but they came across a resolute Brotherhood D side who raced into a 3-1 interval lead. But the Panthers showed their champion mettle by taking the next three matches to take a 4-3 lead before Lee Harvey (+1) – Brotherhood's best player on the night – defeated John Hatley (-6) 11-1, 11-7, 8-11, 11-7 to take the match to a deciding ninth game. However, Sam Hume, who was unbeaten on the night in both singles and doubles, and James Denyer (-6) proved just a little too good for Russell Hillier and Paul Alden (+1) in the last doubles, winning in three-straight to send the Panthers into their first-ever Cup Final.

The Condors and Lions exchanged matches early on in their semi-final with the Condors leading 1-0, 2-1, and 3-2 before the Lions levelled at 3-all, thanks to an 11-8 in the fifth win by Paul Hume (0) against Greg Green (0). But the Condors took the next two matches in three-straight to win the tie 5-3, Colin Stallwood (-3) beating Adam Cuthbert (+1) and Felipe Rodriguez (-3) defeating John Fenton (+1). Crucially, the Condors won both the doubles matches played.

The Final takes place on Tuesday 2nd May at 7.30 at the Brotherhood Hall, Clacton-on-Sea.

* In **Division One** of the League Nomads Lions were 7-3 winners against Brotherhood C. Paul Hume took three, Roger Hance two and John Fenton, making his first League appearance for two years, picked up one. Hume had a close 11-8 in the fifth victory against Alan Burgess. Burgess won twice for Brotherhood whilst Kevin Pryor

enjoyed a tight 11-9 in the decider success against Fenton.

In **Division Two** Nomads Tigers ended their season with a 10-0 victory over Brotherhood E. There were hat-tricks for John Marshall, Daryl Lott and Phil Wolski, Lott defeating Tony Edmonds 11-6 in the fifth and Wolski beating Rodney Betts 11-9 in the fifth.

But the Brotherhood side bounced back and, in their second match of the week, shared the spoils with Nomads Jaguars, a result which mathematically almost guarantees the Brotherhood side Second Division table tennis next season. Duncan Dunne was their unbeaten hero, taking his third maximum of the season, whilst Betts won one and shared a doubles victory with Edmonds. For Nomads, there were a pair apiece for Andrew North and Caroline North, with Kevin Hume defeating Edmonds 3-2 (15-13, 3-11, 9-11, 12-10, 11-4) for the fifth Jaguars' point.

In **Division Three** Debra Found and Alan Charman won three each, and Jackie Bunce a couple, as Windsor Penguins consolidated their third place behind Walton D and Nomads Wildcats with a 9-1 win over Nomads Leopards. Dave Wright defeated Bunce for the Leopards' point.

* The League's Closed Championships, sponsored by Paul Newbould Planning and Building Design Services, take place this weekend (Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd April) at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall. Seventy-eight players will be competing for 12 trophies. Play begins at 9am on both days with the finals – seven on Saturday and five on Sunday – starting at about 4pm on each day. Spectators are welcome and admission is free.

Results

Division 1

Brotherhood C 3 Nomads Lions 7

Division 2

Brotherhood E 5 Nomads Jaguars 5

Nomads Tigers 10 B Brotherhood E 0

Division 3

Nomads Leopards 1 Windsor Penguins 9

Knock-Out Cup: semi-finals

Windsor Condors 5 Nomads Lions 3

Brotherhood D 4 Nomads Panthers 5

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